

THE Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION SINCE 1877

Vol. 137
No. 26

Witnessing Through Media

Conference provides instruction, recognition

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

More than 133 audio-visual and media specialists from Mississippi Baptist churches across the state attended the recent Witnessing Through Media Conference at First Church, Ridgeland, according to the lead planner of the event at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB).

Ian Richardson, MBCB director of communication services, said the 2013 conference included, for the first time, an emphasis on so-called New Media such as Internet web site design and social media.

The 2013 conference marked the second year for instructional sessions on how to get a media ministry started in a local church, after a successful pilot run in 2012, Richardson said.

Instructional sessions were also conducted in camera operation, production and post-production techniques, graph-



ic design, projection systems, software, lighting, and sound. Vendors were on hand to showcase updated equipment and delivery methods, Richardson added.

"The equipment and delivery methods in this area of ministry are changing so rapidly that conferences like this are crucial to our ability to keep abreast of changing tech-

nologies," Richardson said. "Our goal at the conference each year is to equip audio-visual and media specialists from our Mississippi Baptist churches – whether church staff professionals or volunteers – to get their churches' messages into the communities they serve in the most effective possible ways."

The work of those local

church specialists is highlighted at the conference's Awards Banquet, which was keynote this year by Brad McMullan, president and chief executive officer of Buy From a Christian, a web-based merchandising company headquartered in the Jackson area. Award winners this year included:

Front row, from left
■ Harry Medders and Ron-

nie Martin of First Church, Brandon. Division One Best Commercial; Best Web Site.

■ Randy Blakeney, Billy Taylor, and James Tillman of First Church, Laurel. Division One Best Church Musical; Division One Best Worship Service; Division One Best Radio Program.

Middle row, from left

■ Jeffrey Broome and Sarah Hankins of First Church, Clinton. Division One Best Video Magazine; Division One Best Music Video.

■ Michael Bowen of Broadmoor Church, Madison. Division Two Best Church Musical; Division Two Best Commercial; Division Two Best Worship Service; Most Creative Use of Media.

■ Chris Dykes and Scott Vogel of First Church, Laurel. See awards listed above for First Church, Laurel.

Back row

■ Steve Chrestman of Cedar View Church, Olive Branch. Certificate of Recognition.

Winners not pictured include Clarke Venable Church of Decatur, for Division One Best First Time Entry and Division One Best Promotional Video; Brandon Church of Brandon, for Division Two Best First Time Entry; Crossgates Church of Brandon, for Division Two

see MEDIA on p. 8

NOBTS receives largest donation of Kelley era

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — New Orleans Seminary President Chuck Kelley announced details of a \$1.5 million gift to NOBTS from an anonymous donor and other scholarship gifts for bivocational and African American students during the trustee executive committee's June meeting.

Kelley told trustees the "providential gift" — the largest single check during his presidency — comes at a critical time of need for the seminary. The donor designated the gift be used in four ways.

Ten percent of the \$1.5 million gift will provide technology upgrades in Bunyan Building and Hardin Student Center classrooms. For only an additional \$5,000, presentation equipment in both the Leavell

Center and Leavell Chapel also will be upgraded, Kelley said.

Bids for the project already are in hand, with work to begin this summer. "This will be the first time in our history that we've had all of our media presentation equipment on the same generation. We're thrilled about that," Kelley said.

The second designation is for \$600,000 to be used for the construction of an on-campus community center to house the seminary's homeschool program. The gift, plus \$200,000 already set aside for the project, completes the anticipated \$800,000 cost of the building.

The third portion of the gift, totaling \$500,000, will create a new professor position, a professor of church and community ministry in NOBTS' newly-

formed Church and Community Ministries Division. Kelley said the focus of the professorship will be "teaching students how you mobilize a congregation to get involved in ministry in their community around the church and in their city."

The final portion, \$250,000, will go toward entry/exit adjustments made necessary by the construction of a new Walmart in the shopping center located on the east side of the Hardin Student Center. Plans call for the store to open in mid-2014.

"Truly this is a providential gift. It addresses crucial missional and functional needs of the seminary," Kelley said of the entire gift. "This is indeed a providential gift for the School of Providence and Prayer."

In addition to the \$1.5 million four-part gift, the donor family renewed both a \$100,000 scholarship for ministers of small and bivocational churches and a \$100,000 scholarship for African American students in honor of Southern Baptist Convention President Fred Luter.

"Recognizing the need to have more African Americans in the pool of candidates qualified to teach in Southern Baptist colleges and seminaries, the donor also announced a full scholarship for a qualified African American student to pursue a Ph.D. at the seminary," Kelley said.

That scholarship, which will cover tuition, fees, books and housing, also will be named in honor of Luter.

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From the editor

WILLIAM PERKINS

This Holy Ground

One of the high privileges of serving as editor of The Baptist Record is the opportunity to worship with Mississippi Baptists in churches across the state. From the cavernous big-city churches in the pathway of major urban expansions, to the smaller churches in the countryside heavily laden with a rich history, we are reminded of who we are and from whence we came as a people of God.

It's been quite a while since the state's first Baptist preacher, Richard Curtis Jr., debarked his Mississippi River raft in the early 1800's and started organizing churches in the southwest portion of what was soon to become the State of Mississippi. We no longer have to flee bellicose natives or dodge angry Catholics from Louisiana, as did Curtis, but the battle for the souls of Mississippians is far from over. We still have our work cut out for us.

In a state with almost 2,200 Mississippi Baptist churches alone (about 27 churches per county), there is a church literally within walking distance of most Mississippians. Too many people have opted out of attending church, though, and as a result have allowed their relationship to falter with Almighty God and His Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Learned people have made the argument, not entirely invalid, that one needn't attend church to be an observant Christian. That may be so, but the difficulty of practicing a true faith without being part of a body of believers is surely more than most people can overcome in this increasingly materialistic and pagan world.

A church is a sanctuary from the pressures of the world, and a refuge for the spiritually downtrodden. It's the place that fits the description of home in Robert Frost's unforgettable poem, The Death of the Hired Man: "Home is where, when you have to go there, they have to take you in."

The mere hour that it takes to attend a modern worship service can

do more to restore a person's zeal for life than many hours of psychotherapy. The addition of Sunday School and Discipleship Training help gird us for the never-ending battle against the Evil One who is so very much alive and well in our era.

Little ones begin the process of Scripture memorization that will serve them well through a lifetime. Royal Ambassadors and Girls in Action learn of missions around the world and find their own place in Kingdom work.

Church is a lighthouse beacon for the lost that they can follow to salvation. Church is a solid anchor through the storms of life. Church is energy for the spiritually exhausted. Church is all those things and much more, but above all it is holy ground.

In our so-called enlightened, post-Christian culture, virtually nothing is thought of as holy any longer. In the world's ears, "holy" is simply another word to be placed for dramatic effect in front of a variety of verbal vulgarities. The iconoclasts in Hollywood seldom think about it in any other fashion, as evidenced by their vapid scripts.

We should not be deceived. Holiness is and always has been important to God. Even the simplest concordance lists 42 biblical references for holy and holiness, almost evenly split between the Old and New Testaments. Every time we enter church, we are standing on holy ground. However the world chooses to define holy, the word should have special meaning to us when we tread the precious soil on which our houses of worship are built.

God considers it holy ground and we should, too. That means we should conduct ourselves in holy ways, both in spirit and body, when we are on holy ground.

The latter part of Hebrews 12:14 states, "...without holiness no one will see the Lord." Disregarding the ways of the world, let us live by those words else the true meaning be explained to us on our day of reckoning.

No newspaper next week

Due to postal regulations that limit publication of The Baptist Record to 50 issues per year, the newspaper will not print on the date of July 4. The next issue of The Baptist Record will be dated July 11. For more information, contact the newspaper at baptistrecord@mbcb.org. The staff of The Baptist Record thanks you for your support and wishes you and your family a happy Independence Day.

Join us in fighting porn

Exhilarating yet very challenging. That was my experience of the Join One Million Men launch at the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting two weeks ago in Houston. The reception to this initiative to combat pornography exceeded expectations. Thank you, Southern Baptists, for once again leading the way in addressing the hard issues.

At the Join One Million Men booth, hundreds of people came through to visit, ask questions, share stories and pick up materials. Each conversation was enlightening and at times emotionally taxing as we addressed what pastors and churches are experiencing as their members battle the new Bubonic Plague — Christian men and increasingly Christian women struggling with viewing pornography. I came away from the week with at least 10 conclusions:

■ We are past time in addressing the issue of pornography in the church. There must be an urgency about doing everything possible to start the discussion in every church. No church and Christian home is unaffected by pornography.

■ Pastors must understand that this issue is destroying the men in their church along with their marriages, and that every young man is in danger of believing that the images in Internet pornography are normal. God's standard of sexual health must be promoted from the pulpit.

■ Internet pornography is the perfect trap for men. With its accessibility, anonymity, affordability, and addictive nature, one look can hook. Then men struggle in shameful silence feeling they are alone in the struggle. A pastor's silence on the subject underscores that shame.

■ Pastors are fearful. They are fearful of confessing their own struggles and fearful of the response from the congregation if they dare to broach the subject of pornography. The fear of God must replace the fear of man.

■ Evangelism and revival are integrally connected to personal purity. Jesus told us, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8). If we want to see God work in our churches, we must address the issue of pornography's attack on purity.

■ Women in the church, specifically wives and moms, are the key factor in



Guest opinion
with Jay Dennis

bringing this issue of porn among Christian to the forefront of discussion in churches. When women pray about and discuss issues, eternal things can happen. We need for the women to declare, "Not in our church."

■ The stories are heartbreaking, shocking, and clear examples of how effective Satan is in using this tool against Christian men. A pastor would have to put his head in the sand not to know that this is one of the most devastating attacks ever on the very souls of men.

■ Increasingly, Christian women are struggling with viewing pornography. This will continue to escalate and have detrimental effects on marriages and motherhood. Resources are desperately needed.

■ Materials addressing a Christian's pornography struggle are needed in Spanish. We are committed to making this happen with key resources: Our Hardcore Battle Plan; Our Hardcore Battle Plan for Wives; and Our Hardcore Battle Plan DVD.

■ On a Christian university and seminary classroom setting, we absolutely must train our young men and women going into ministry to address the plague of pornography that is affecting every home of the people they will lead. Curriculum and resources dealing with how pastors can address those church members struggling with viewing pornography need to be a top priority for ministry training.

Freedom begins with a choice. It's time to open the door to have the discussion. We have a Hardcore Battle Plan.

Dennis is pastor of First Church at the Mall in Lakeland, FL, and founder of the Join One Million Men movement (joinonemillionmen.org) challenging one million Christian men to commit to living a pornography free-life and challenging one million Christian women to pray for one million Christian men to live pornography-free lives.

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BAPTISTS

VOLUME 137 • NUMBER 26 • ISSN-0005-5778

Published weekly except weeks of July 4 and Christmas by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, 515 Mississippi Street, Jackson, MS 39201. Subscription \$10.35 per year payable in advance. Economy plans available for cooperating Mississippi churches. Periodicals postage paid at Jackson, MS. Member, Association of State Baptist Papers. Deadlines: News items — one calendar week prior to requested publication date. All submissions are subject to editing.

POLITICS

Baptists, Catholics teaming up to fight abortion mandate

WASHINGTON (BP) — The two largest religious denominations in the U.S. have joined forces in an effort to protect freedom of conscience, as full enforcement of the Obama administration's abortion/contraception mandate nears.

Russell D. Moore, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC), and William Lori, Catholic archbishop of Baltimore and chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) ad hoc committee for religious liberty, urged the U.S. Congress in a June 21 joint letter to pass legislation designed to bolster conscience protections in health care.

The proposal for which they sought support — the Health Care Conscience Rights Act, H.R. 940 in the House and S. 1204 in the Senate — addresses health care generally, but Moore and Lori cited the abortion/contraception mandate as the most immediate challenge to religious freedom in that arena.

The mandate, part of regulations implementing the 2010 health-care reform law, requires nearly all employers to carry insurance plans that cover drugs defined by the federal government as contraceptives, even if they can cause chemical abortions. Among those state-defined contraceptives are Plan B and other morning-after pills, which can prevent implantation of tiny embryos, and "ella," which, in a fashion similar to the abortion drug RU 486, can act even after implantation to end the life of a child.

The rule mandates plans to underwrite sterilization for women and related "education and counseling."

The abortion/contraception requirement is the target of more than 60 federal lawsuits and will be implemented for Christian institutions and other non-profit organizations beginning Aug. 1. It will take effect when each organization's health plan begins a new year. The mandate's start-up date for for-profit organizations was Aug. 1, 2012.

While acknowledging Southern Baptists and Roman Catholics differ theologically, Moore and Lori said in their letter they are united in believing legisla-

tive action is needed to protect freedom of conscience.

"[M]any people are being forced — and many others will soon be forced — to either follow what the government compels or suffer" for their beliefs, they wrote. Southern Baptists and Catholics both "value God's gift of procreation," Moore and Lori told senators and representatives.

There are 77.7 million Catholics in the United States. The Southern Baptist Convention is the largest non-Catholic denomination with about 15.8 million members in more than 46,000 churches.

While the USCCB opposes coverage of all contraceptives, the ERLC's objection is to contraceptives that can cause abortions.

ERLC says the abortion/contraception mandate, also known as the HHS mandate because of its issuance by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, gives those who object to it three options, all unacceptable:

- Violate their consciences by obeying it.

- Violate the law, which could produce hefty fines.

- Stop providing health coverage, which could force workers to purchase insurance with provisions they object to and possibly open the employers up to penalties.

At a Capitol Hill briefing June 21 Barrett Duke, ERLC vice president for public policy and research, said the federal government "is basically putting us in a position where we have to decide whether ... to obey God or to obey our government."

"Southern Baptists are determined to obey God, and we are standing with Catholics on this because this isn't only a Catholic issue," Duke said. "This is a Southern Baptist issue. This is an evangelical issue. This is a faith issue."

The Obama administration proposed a rule change in February to address conscience objections to the abortion/contraception mandate. Religious liberty advocates said it appears to protect churches and church ministries, but not religious institutions and individuals.

The ERLC has signed onto five briefs defending the religious freedom of entities challenging the mandate at the appeals court level.



ETHNITICITY IN SBC — Members of three advisory councils — African American, Hispanic, and Asian — joined in a panel discussion of the significance of ethnic groups within the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting on June 10 in Houston. (BP photo)

Panel: Ethnic witness in SBC needed to reach nation, world

HOUSTON (BP) — Southern Baptists of all ethnicities must join together to reach an ever-diversifying nation and the world for Christ, leaders from three ethnic advisory councils said during a panel discussion in Houston.

"It's not a great secret that Southern Baptists were not always as ethnically diverse as we are today," moderator Ed Stetzer said June 10 at the Executive Committee exhibit at the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC).

"We've made remarkable progress. As a matter of fact, when news reporters do kind of a forthright, well-told story, they will hold up Southern Baptists as one of those who've increased ethnic diversity in our churches," Stetzer, president of LifeWay Research, said.

Even so, leadership roles throughout the convention are occupied largely by Anglos, Stetzer said.

The panel included Paul Kim, Jerry Lepasana, and Alan Chan of the Asian Advisory Council; A.B. Vines and K. Marshall Williams Sr. of the African American Advisory Council; Daniel Sanchez of the Hispanic Advisory Council; and Frank Page and Ken Weathersby of the SBC Executive Committee.

Nearly 10,000 of the SBC's 46,000 churches are "ethnic in some shape, form or fashion," making Southern Baptists by far the most ethnic convention in the nation, said Page, the Executive Committee's president and transition pastor of First Church, Jackson.

Lepasana, pastor of Bible Church International in Randolph, N.J., said the Filipino congregation he leads finds great value in partnering with the Southern Baptist Convention because the Cooperative Program helped start many of the Filipino churches in the New York and New Jersey area.

The Cooperative Program is the funding channel by which Southern Baptists support state, national, and international missions and ministry.

"We always want to make sure that we stay connected to Southern Baptists because we feel that there's this partnership that allows us to be able to expand the Kingdom with other Southern Baptist churches. That has been a critical partnership for us," Lepasana said.

Vines, pastor of New Seasons Church in Spring Valley, Ca., said he believes now is the time for action among ethnic Baptists. "We have these talks behind doors, so it's time for us to come in the room, get at the table and talk clearly and talk truthfully... We have fears about different cultures, but those things need to be put away because Christ has evened the playing field."

Kim, pastor emeritus of Antioch Church in Cambridge, Ma., made a motion at the SBC annual meeting in 2009 that the Executive Committee study how different ethnic groups could work together in the convention.

When he walks onto the convention floor, Kim said, he wonders where the ethnic groups are. "Southern Baptists cannot do the mission with one ethnic group," he said.

Williams, pastor of Nazarene Baptist Church in Philadelphia, said the "elephant in the room is racism."

"It's a problem all over the nation, and if the church of the Lord Jesus Christ doesn't stand up, this nation is doomed for hell and I'm calling our convention to step up — black, white, red and green — because really the issue is not skin, it's sin. We need to call it what it is, that we might be able to come together as the body of Christ because Jesus is coming soon."

Many Anglo pastors don't know an African American pastor or an Asian pastor or a Hispanic pastor, Williams said, and that must change.

Sanchez, a professor of missions at Southwestern Seminary, noted that many ethnic people arrived in the United States and had to adjust to a different culture and language "and have done beautifully."

"I think by virtue of our experiences or pilgrimages as such in the assimilation process, we are in a marvelous position to be missionaries in this country and around the world," Sanchez said. "Already we've adapted."

Southern Baptists, Sanchez said, are taking the lead in integrating ethnic groups. "Many multicultural congregations now are showing people that it can be done," he said.

Chan, a pastor at the Los Angeles-area Mandarin Church in Alhambra, agreed with Vines that Southern Baptists must seize the moment to unite in order to reach the world for Christ. He mentioned traveling recently with SBC President Fred Luter and other pastors.

The team was unique, Chan said, because there were two African American pastors, two Asian American pastors, a Hispanic pastor and an Anglo pastor.

"Wherever we went, people would look at us and wonder what in the world we were doing," Chan said. "That's the beautiful picture because the Great Commission asks us to make disciples of all nations. I think this is the strength of our convention. We're not here to save the convention but to obey the Great Commission, to do what Jesus asked us to do."

Weathersby, vice president of convention advancement at the Executive Committee, said the various ethnic groups are Southern Baptists "because of our values." The task of reaching the nations for Christ is what unites them, he said, and "we need to be planting the seed of the Gospel."

Stetzer said, "This is a great conversation, but I think we had it last year and I think we had it the year before. We've had it in different forms. ... How do we not have the same conversation 10 years from now?"

The panel identified five ways: Tell the story, better information leading to action, intentionality, relationships, and cultural sensitivity.

Jesus was and still is the master storyteller. Some of the stories that He told were about real live folks. Others were a composite of truths in a framework that we call parables. His ability to communicate with one person or thousands is unmatched in history. As He closed that masterful message that we call the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus told of two builders. I suppose that you could call them home builders, but they are pictured more as life builders.

One man went out and built a house on sand. The rains came and the floods descended beating upon that house and great was the fall of it. The other man went out and built his house upon the rock. The rains descended, the floods came and beat upon that house and it stood the violent attacks. The only difference in the two houses was the foundation. But if you revisit these two stories and you stop and process it, how long does it take a man to build a house? Well especially in Jesus' day, you realize that it could not be accomplished in a day, a week, or probably in a month or maybe even in a year. Both of the men spent lots of time and effort in making the necessary decisions in order to build their own house.

Recently, I heard a physician saying that he tells nearly all of his patients to remember a two word question – what then? He went so far as to say that he encouraged them to write it down on a piece of paper and put it somewhere prominent where they would see it every day or several times a day. What then? His application for his patient was to apply whatever medicine, practice or change of lifestyle that he had encouraged them to pursue by asking – what then? If they did what the physician asked them to do,



Directions

With Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

What Then?

or if they chose not to listen to him and just go on their way – what then?

Concerning the two builders that Jesus spoke of, for the man building on a foundation that was not solid and would not hold it would have been a brilliant thing for him to think about what he was doing. He should have questioned where he was building and the way that he was going about establishing his house by asking – what then? The other builder who was building on the solid footing may have asked – what then? But even if he did not, it would have been commendable to ask because what he was putting in place was something that was solid, quality and lasting. Ponder this process for a few moments and let me just point out some things as you think about – what then?

First of all realize that today's decisions always hold tomorrow's consequences. It is so often difficult to help young people see that their momentary decisions can have long lasting

consequences. Young people thrown into an arena of almost unlimited freedoms charge head long into their newfound world filled with activities, experimentation and grownup exploits that may not have been processed thoughtfully. That is true whether it is drugs or drinking, sex or speed or risky activities that they joyfully and playfully think of as just living on the edge. What you do today may have long-term consequences tomorrow.

A second consideration should be that biblical wisdom demands that you look at the future. Regardless of what age group you are in, it is possible that biblical wisdom is being ignored. Young, old, in-between, college educated and illiterate all seem to have the same approach. You do not have to pay attention to the future. I am not talking about retirement years or how your retirement plans are being put in place. I am talking about planning for eternity. While some people go about building their home and building their life void of

any relationship with Christ, it is the one and only thing that will make an eternal difference in your life.

In the case of the story in The Sermon on the Mount, Jesus pointed out that the man who built his house on the sand left out the one most significant thing. When you leave out Jesus that is the decision you too are making. If you read the Bible story again, it is interesting to note that the house that is spoken of is the same Greek word throughout. There is no difference in the outward appearance of what these two men were doing. But one of them was making a decision that leaves out the unseen and the most important thing about a structure – the foundation. In biblical words, it is talking about Jesus.

A final thought to consider is that most of the crashes in life, like the home falling in, are ultimately our responsibility. We cannot blame other folks for what we have built, what we did and the decisions that we made. Years ago a wise mother was being pressed by one of her children to let her do something. The daughter was making some strong points with mom like, "Well, everybody else is doing it." At that point, the mom explained to her daughter, "No, not everyone is doing it because you are not going to do it. But more importantly you need to know that even if everyone else was doing it that does not make it right." So as you plan your day, your week and your eternity making one decision after another, pause long enough to stop, think through and maybe ask yourself a two word question that may be enlightening – what then?

The author can be contacted at directions@mbcb.org.

OBITUARY

Jim Sanders, 74, went to be with the Lord on April 18. Sanders was born in Lufkin, Tex. on Dec. 5, 1939 and graduated from Baylor University in 1964. Bro. Jim was a Baptist minister for over 52 years and was also a horse trainer and farrier. He pastored churches in Texas and in Mississippi in Smith, Newton and Scott counties. In recent years, he served as interim pastor for many churches in central and southeast Mississippi.

He was married to the late Delores Estelle Pickering Sanders for 44 years until parted by her death on Dec. 31, 2003. He is survived by his wife of eight years, Amy Sanderson Sanders of Waynesboro; four children: Lane



SANDERS

Freeman's Funeral Home in Waynesboro on April 20 and funeral services were held at Hopewell Church in Lake on April 21 with interment at Leaf River Church Cemetery in Pineville. Mark McDonald, Bobby Sanderson, and Tim Sanderson officiated.

CLASSIFIEDS

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death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose
from the grave to forgive my sins
and to restore my relationship
with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ
into my life. From this time on,
I want to live in a loving relationship
with Him. (I receive Christ as
my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave
the right to become children of God, even to
those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a
local Southern Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

Staff Changes



CHUNKY CHURCH, CHUNKY,
has called Matt Pittman as pastor.
He is shown with his wife Calah and
son Brycen.



**FAIR RIVER
CHURCH,
BROOKHAVEN,**
has called Jay
Anderson as pastor,
effective May 26.
He is a native of
Batesville, a recent
graduate of Liberty
Baptist Theological
Seminary, and
comes to Fair River
having served Liberty
Hill Church, Pope,
for nine years. He is
shown with his wife
Amy and children
Jared, Savannah,
Amber, and Jesse.



WARREN ASSOCIATION, VICKSBURG,
has named Bruce Bryant of
Clinton as Associational Missions
Director effective June 3. Bryant has
served on staff at First Church, Clinton,
transitional pastor of Immanuel
Church, Cleveland, and interim pastor
of Calvary Church, Vicksburg. He is
shown with his wife, Susan.



LOCUST HILL CHURCH, PONTOTOC COUNTY
called David Ross as pastor October 2012. Shown are the Rosses: Kirby, David, Maggie, Monica, and Wesley.



FIRST CHURCH, SUMMERMALL,
has called Philip
Cooper as senior pastor.
He and his wife, Tina,
come from First Church,
Piedmont, Ala. He was
born in Memphis and
grew up in New Albany.
He is a graduate of Blue
Mountain College and
Mid-America Seminary.
He has pastored churches in Mississippi and Alabama.
The Coopers have two daughters, one son, and five grandchildren.

Submission Guidelines

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts

are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either e-mail, CD or DVD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lit. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items are generally not publishable. Photographs can not be returned. Please do not attach photos with tape or staples.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape-, building-, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

Just for the Record



LIBERTY CHURCH, CARROLL COUNTY, honored all mothers in attendance May 11. Among those honored were Jean Dubard, mother with the most family members present; Blanche Dubard, oldest mother; and youngest mother Emily Hammon with daughter Zoe. Gary Tanner, pastor.



NEW PROSPECT CHURCH, BROOKHAVEN, held a baby dedication June 9. Shown are Gage Burnett and Calan Whittington and their families with pastor Willie Welch.



FIRST CHURCH, VICKSBURG, dedicated its new rock climbing wall in its Family Life Center. Josh Gee, minister of students/activities, led a service of music and thanksgiving. Shown is Brett Williams on a demonstration climb.



MIDWAY CHURCH, PONTOTOC, held a baby dedication service May 26. Shown are Justin and Stephanie Price with their baby, Ann-Hadley. Also shown are siblings, Adecy and Wesson. Tommy Tackett, pastor.



The WMU ladies of **NORTH COLUMBIA CHURCH, COLUMBIA**, honored high school graduates with a luncheon May 26. Shown are Charlotte Hibley, Lou Boudreaux, Anna Godwin, Bonnie Hudson, Vicki Sanford, and Suzanne Bowman.



MEN FROM WANILLA CHURCH, MONTICELLO, attending the 2013 Gridiron Men's Conference were Tim Lea, Rick Davis, Adam Watson, Lee Falter, Brad Boyles, and Marcus Killingsworth.



A mission team from **FIRST CHURCH, QUITMAN**, recently went to Scotland where they were hosted by the Benhar Evangelical Church. The team did a variety of activities including marching in the annual Gala Day parade, carrying the U.S. and Mississippi flags. Team members were Hannah Hampton, Kimberly Floyd, Ashton Howell, Kaitlin Davis, pastor Gene Neal, Linda Neal (not pictured), Mallory Slay and Cissi Majure. Also shown is Ian Loughrin, pastor of the Benhar church.

In other Church News:

► **Crestview Church, Petal**, will be holding a joint worship service with Mt. Vernon Missionary Baptist Church July 7, 10 a.m. Mt. Vernon was destroyed by the tornado which struck the Hattiesburg/Petal area Feb. 10. For more information, call (601) 582-1559.

► **Crane Creek Church, Hancock County**, is hosting a 4th of July celebration at 6:30 p.m. at the Necaise Crossing Ball Park, including The Power Team, Damascus Road, fireworks, and concessions. Free.

► **First Church, Mathiston**, will present a patriotic celebration June 30, 6 p.m., with a Webster County Association Choir and Orchestra. For more information, call (662) 258-3491.

► **High Hill Church, Neshoba County**, will host The Riders for their 5th Sunday gospel singing June 30, 6 p.m.



OAKLAND CHURCH, WALNUT, recognizes its Bible drillers and leaders: Kay Winter, Bonnie Devore, Luke Devore, Bill Winter, and pastor Michael Wilbanks.

Vacation Bible School



CALVARY CHURCH, BOGUE CHITTO: Vacation Bible School; Melane Crosby, director; Hal Hatten, pastor; shown are students from babies through 6th grade and leaders.

OLD RICE ROAD CHURCH, MADISON: June 2 – 7, with record numbers in attendance.



MALMAISON CHURCH, CARROLLTON: Shown are the participants.

In other VBS News:

- **Moselle Memorial Church, Moselle:** July 15 – 19, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m. For registration, call (601) 584-9905 or visit mosellememorial@icloud.com
- **Immanuel Church, Greenwood:** July 15 – 19, 5:45 – 8:15 p.m.; family night, July 19; supper provided.
- **First Church, Eupora:** July 7 – 12, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.; family night, Friday.
- **Fellowship Church, Starkville:** July 8 – 12, 6 – 8:15 p.m., ages 4 – 11
- **Mesa Church, Tylertown:** July 8 – 12, 3 – 6 p.m.; commencement exercises, Fri., 6:30 p.m.; children, youth, and adults; call (601) 303-2368 for more information.
- **County Line Church, Ovett:** June 16 – 20; average attendance, 40, ages 4 years – youth; twenty-three workers; Baptist Children's Village missions offering, \$630.79.



SAUL'S VALLEY CHURCH, MONTICELLO: June 17 – 21; commencement June 23.



FAIR RIVER CHURCH, BROOKHAVEN: June 3 – 7; average daily attendance, 96; two professions of faith; Tonya Luper, director; Jay Anderson, pastor.



LAKE WASHINGTON FIRST CHURCH, GLEN ALLAN: June 3 – 7; enrollment, 76; Jimmy McLendon, pastor.



BUNKER HILL CHURCH, COLUMBIA: celebrated its VBS graduation with a special program June 9.



CENTER RIDGE CHURCH, YAZOO CITY: June 8 – 9, twenty-four children in attendance each day.

MEDIA

cont. from p. 1

Best Feature Presentation; Hillcrest Church of New Albany, for Division Two Best Promotional Video.

In addition to Cedar View Church, Certificates of Rec-

ognition were presented to Blaine Church, Brandon; First Church, Summit; First Church, Jackson; and First Church, Starkville.

The Witnessing Through Media Conference each year is a great place to network with other specialists, get fresh ideas from a variety of people, and

get to know other folks who are doing the same things you're doing in your church. The major difference between this conference and other big shows is that Witnessing Through Media is focused on Christian ministry and our mutual commitment to the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20).

For more information on the Witnessing Through Media program, contact Richardson at (601) 292-3378 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 378. E-mail: irichardson@mccb.org. Web site: mccb.org.

The MCB Communication Services Department is also

available for free training and consulting services to member churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. For more information on those services, contact Richardson.

The Witnessing Through Media program is supported by gifts to the Mississippi Cooperative Program.

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this organization shall be Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union, Auxiliary to the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

The purpose shall be to promote Christian missions through the organization of Woman's Missionary Union in the churches and ministries of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

ARTICLE III. RELATIONSHIPS

Section 1. Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union is governed by an Executive Board comprised of officers, area representatives and members-at-large. The professional staff shall be ex-officio members without vote.

Section 2. Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union functions within Mississippi Baptist Convention Board policies.

Section 3. Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union shall cooperate with the Mississippi Baptist Convention in the promotion of Christian missions through a program of study, prayer, giving, and action.

Section 4. Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union, recognizing the autonomy of area, associational and church Woman's Missionary Union organizations, shall cooperate on each level to achieve unity of purpose and collective action.

Section 5. Offerings promoted shall include Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions, Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions, Margaret Lackey Offering for State Missions, and Edwina Robinson Woman's Missionary Union Special Day Offering.

Section 6. Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union shall strongly support and promote the Cooperative Program of the Southern Baptist Convention.

ARTICLE IV. MEMBERS

The members of each Woman's Missionary Union organization in churches and ministries of the Mississippi Baptist Convention shall comprise the membership of Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union.

ARTICLE V. MEETINGS

Section 1. A regular meeting of the Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union shall be held annually, time and place shall be recommended by the Woman's Missionary Union professional staff, with the assistance of the Executive Board.

Section 3. Woman's Missionary Union members present in any session of an annual meeting shall constitute the voting body. Business shall be conducted when scheduled in the printed annual meeting program;



Bylaws of Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union



exceptions shall be made when the body votes to schedule an additional business session.

ARTICLE VI. THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1. Regular meetings of the Executive Board shall be held semi-annually.

Section 2. Special meetings may be called by the president, or shall be called at the request of at least one third of the voting members of the Executive Board.

Section 3. The Executive Board shall nominate all executive and professional personnel on the staff of Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union, consistent with Executive Board and Mississippi Baptist Convention Board policies with election by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Section 4. The Executive Board shall perform its tasks through committees appointed by the president in consultation with the executive director-treasurer.

Section 5. The Executive Board shall be responsible for formulating broad policies for integrating the work of the committees of the Board and of the executive and professional staff.

Section 6. The Executive Board shall hold and administer all property on behalf of Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union, and shall have the power of trustees in business matters, such as acquiring and conveying property.

Section 7. The Executive Board shall administer the Edwina Robinson Woman's Missionary Union Special Day Offering, Garawa Camp and Conference Center fees, and Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union's allocation of the Margaret Lackey Offering for State Missions.

Section 8. The Executive Board shall hold the executive director-treasurer responsible for the administration, development, and execution of established plans, policies, and broad programs of the Executive Board.

Section 9. Should a vacancy occur in an area office, nominees will be solicited from the area leadership and temporary appointment made by the president until formally elected at the next annual meeting.

Section 10. The officers:

A. The officers shall be a president, vice president, and a secretary.

B. These officers shall be elected at the annual meeting and shall hold office for one year. The term of elected officers shall not exceed four successive one year terms.

C. One year shall elapse before officers may be eligible for election to the previously held office.

D. The officers shall have served on the Executive Board for at least one year.

E. The term of office shall begin at the final adjournment of the annual meeting.

F. The duties of the various officers shall be such as are specified in these bylaws, and by the policy of the Executive Board of Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union.

G. Should a vacancy occur in the office of president, the vice-president shall assume the office of president until the position shall be filled by election at the next annual meeting.

H. Should a vacancy occur in the office of vice-president, the position shall be filled by election at the next annual meeting.

I. Should a vacancy occur in the office of secretary, the Officer Selection Committee will appoint a replacement until the position shall be filled by election at the next annual meeting.

J. The Officer Selection Committee shall select the following nominees each year: president, vice president, and secretary.

K. The Officer Selection Committee shall be composed of the area representatives.

L. Following the annual meeting and preceding the next regularly scheduled Executive Board meeting, the secretary shall meet with the Officer Selection Committee for organization and the election of a chairman.

M. The Officer Selection Committee shall meet at the regularly scheduled Executive Board meeting prior to annual meeting.

N. After selecting nominees, the Officer Selection Committee shall expediently obtain the consent of all nominees.

O. The chairman shall bring the report of the Officer Selection Committee to Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union in annual meeting.

P. Nominations may also be made from the floor. Should there be more than one nominee for an office, election shall be by ballot. The votes shall

be counted by the Officer Selection Committee and the nominee receiving the largest number of votes shall be elected.

Section 11. Area Representatives

- A. The tenure of office for area representatives shall not exceed four successive one year terms. One year shall elapse before one would be eligible for election to the board in the same position
- B. After nominations, area representatives will be recommended by the president and executive director-treasurer for election at the annual meeting.
- C. The term of office shall begin at the final adjournment of the annual meeting.

Section 12. Members-at-Large

- A. The tenure of office for members-at-large shall not exceed three successive one year terms. One year shall elapse before one would be eligible for election to the board in the same position
- B. After nominations, members-at-large will be recommended by the president and executive director-treasurer for election at the annual meeting.
- C. The term of office shall begin at the final adjournment of the annual meeting.

ARTICLE VII. COMMITTEES

Section 1. The president and the executive director-treasurer shall be ex-officio members of all committees of Woman's Missionary Union except the Officer Selection Committee.

Section 2. Committees, standing or special, shall be appointed by the president as authorized by Woman's Missionary Union or the Executive Board in consultation with the executive director-treasurer.

ARTICLE VIII.

PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order Revised shall govern Woman's Missionary Union in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are consistent with these bylaws.

ARTICLE IX. AMENDMENTS

The bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote at any annual meeting provided that the proposed amendment has been published in two issues of The Baptist Record at least one month before the WMU annual meeting and has also been submitted in writing to the Executive Board at its last semi-annual meeting.

*Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union
Bylaws, Revised, August 2013*

THE VILLAGE VIEW



Dr. Rory Lee, Executive Director
P.O. Box 27
Clinton, MS 39060-0027
(662) 922-2242
www.baptistchildrensvillage.com

GIFTS OF HONOR AND MEMORY

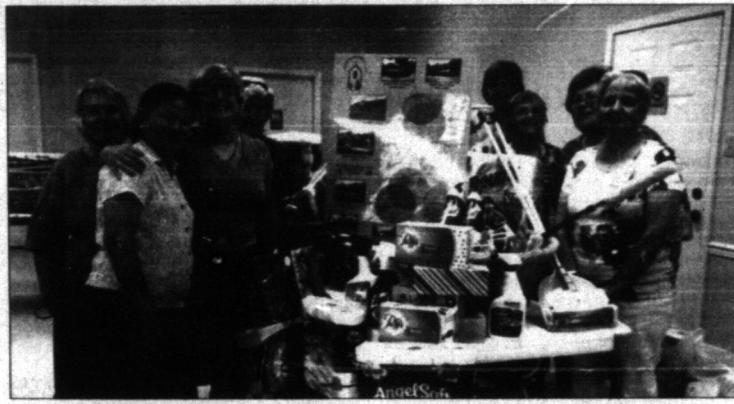
A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful, and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

MARCH 2013

MEMORIALS

Mrs. Mozelle Mangum	Mr. & Mrs. Greg L. Boston
Mr. & Mrs. Ralph L. Carroll	Mr. & Mrs. Jason A. Gambone
Misses Sue & Hettie E. Williams	Ms. Wanda J. King Mr. & Mrs. Wally J. Simpson
C. M. (Mack) May	Mr. James M. Carlisle Mr. Jarrod Reece
Mr. & Mrs. James Crosby	Wayne Miley
Mr. & Mrs. J. A. Maggio	Mr. & Mrs. Larry P. Franklin
Mr. James L. Dunn	Mr. Hilbert Miller
Ollie Mayhall	Mr. & Mrs. Daniel A. Smith
Vernon & David Robertson	Melvin Moore
Johnny McArthur	Mrs. Edith M. Aldridge
Mr. & Mrs. Gene D. Saucier	Dr. Tracy J. Moser, Sr.
Sharon McCord	Mr. & Mrs. Tom Coward
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Bruton	Mr. & Mrs. William A. Switzer & Paula
Mr. & Mrs. John W. Potter	Mrs. Donna Murphy Mr. & Mrs. Bill Harris
Frank Norris McPhail, Sr.	Mr. Arthur Nail
BARACA SSC, FBC Coldwater	Mrs. Lona M. Southerland
Buena Vista Women's Club	Timmy Neal
Helen Anderson	John & Carolyn Pope
Family	Mrs. Ruth Newberry Ms. Tina G. Roberts
Mr. & Mrs. David E. Goff	Mr. Jackie L. Nordan
Mr. & Mrs. Loyd D. Merritt	Rev. & Mrs. Jimmy Brelan
Ms. Nancy S. Jaffe	Warren Oakley
Patsy & James Sugg	Mr. & Mrs. Larry Gnemi
Mr. & Mrs. Charles E. Mohon	Thad Owens
Ms. Ann Kelly	Lucy Keene SSC, New Prospect BC
The Brandes Family	Mr. & Mrs. Joe Maggio
Mr. & Mrs. George R. Nelms	Mrs. Laurie Sisco
Gary & Paula Schneider	Mr. & Mrs. Phil Hall
	Eloise Tews Smith
	Thad O. Owens, Sr.
	Mr. & Mrs. Earl Sisco
	Dr. Charles Standback

Ralph Page	Mr. & Mrs. Paul Bullard
Chris Patton	Mr. & Mrs. Bill Freeman
Mrs. Carmon Pittman	Ms. Pauline G. Sinopoli & Family
Mr. Elwood Pittman	Mr. & Mrs. Olen S. Broom
Jimmy Pittman	Mr. & Mrs. Gene D. Saucier
Mrs. Martha Pittman	Mr. & Mrs. Thomas D. James
Alyce Porter	Mr. & Mrs. Percy J. Peeler
Virgie Prewitt	Billie O. Jarnigan
Mrs. Carla Primeaux	Faith SSC, FBC Picayune
W. T. Rankin	Vernon & David Robertson
	Mrs. Joyce C. Allen
Mr. & Mrs. Curtis Rawson	Mr. & Mrs. Paul Bullard
Helen Rawson	Mr. & Mrs. Danny Withers
Ralph Rives	Mrs. Ann B. Dale
Mr. Donald K. Robbins	Herman & Sharon
	Dungan
	Mickey & Bonnie
	Daughdrill
	Mr. & Mrs. Jimmie L. Manton
	Mr. & Mrs. Joe Loftin
	Mr. & Mrs. Olen S. Broom
	Mr. & Mrs. Jim Callender
	Rev. E. J. Slonaker
Joe Robertson	Mrs. Ann B. Dale
Mrs. Martha Jones Robinson	Mrs. Martha Jones Robinson
	Mr. & Mrs. Leroy Peeples
Roy Ross	Mr. & Mrs. Marlon Nichols
	Diane Sanders
	Mrs. Martha Till
	Mrs. Sarah Sanders
	Central BC
	Mrs. Lillian Williams Sandifer
	Mr. & Mrs. Charles Morrow
	Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Hassett
	Mr. Robert E. Stevens
	Mrs. Charlene Jones
	Mr. & Mrs. Danny Tyler
	Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Garrett
	Virgil & Lillian Sandifer
	Ms. Rose B. Beggs
	Margaret Saulters
	Herman & Sharon
	Dungan
	Gary Saxton
	Ms. Joyce N. Burnette
	Evelyn B. Sharp
	Mrs. Lillian S. Easom
	Bob Shelby
	Kololo BC
	Mrs. Lee Shivers
	Imogene Robbins' Family
	Mrs. Laurie Sisco
	Mr. & Mrs. Phil Hall
	Eloise Tews Smith
	Mr. & Mrs. Earl Sisco
	Thad O. Owens, Sr.
	Mr. & Mrs. James



AngelStar

THE HOLMES COUNTY BAPTIST ASSOCIATION WMU, led by Mrs. Terry Green, recently collected items for The Baptist Children's Village at their gathering and invited Chrystelle Thame, BCV Director of Public Relations, to address the group.

Mrs. Lona M. Southerland	Ms. Mary Carney Mrs. Chrystelle Thame	John Banks Mr. & Mrs. Charlie Breland
Dr. David Lee Stentz	Rev. Al Green Mr. & Mrs. James C. Hurdle	Harriet "Lovie" Baret Dr. & Mrs. Gerald J. Hasselman
Iris Lynn Stuart	Mr. & Mrs. Gene D. Saucier	Phillip Bass Herman & Sharon Dungan
Mrs. Margie Sullivan	Lunette & Gayden Hughes SSC IV	Mr. & Mrs. E. W. Speights
Reba M. Thaxton	Mr. & Mrs. Gregg T. Tindle	Mrs. Dorothy "Dot" H. Beard Mr. & Mrs. Frank O. Crosthwait
Mrs. Peggy Taylor	Mr. & Mrs. Charles K. Partridge	Mr. Carney Bell Mr. & Mrs. Jim Richmond & Family
Anita P. Tippy	Adult 5 Mens SSC, FBC McComb	Robert Bennett, Jr. Mr. & Mrs. J. W. Potter
Renea Setser	Mr. & Mrs. Lamar Gordon	Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Bruton
Bobby Thame	Mrs. Chrystelle Thames	Mr. & Mrs. Larry Bennett
Claude Tullos	Ms. Mary Lou Blair	Mr. & Mrs. Robert W. Hughes
Andrea Tyner	Jackie, Carolyn & Jordan Wooley	Mr. Blake Bierbaum Mr. & Mrs. Jim Richmond & Family
Mr. Leigh Van Hoose	Mr. & Mrs. Jennings Dixon	Bill Bishop Hon. & Mrs. Jess H. Dickinson
Mike Vance	Mr. & Mrs. Donny Coleman	Joseph Michael "Mike" Bishop Mr. & Mrs. Gerald Buchanan
	Martha Alois Weeks	Harry Blackmon Hon. & Mrs. Jess H. Dickinson
	Ms. Patsy Giffin	Mrs. Bea Bond Ruth SSC, Juniper Grove BC
	James H. Wells, Sr.	Leo Bonner Ms. Judy H. Lacy
	Young at Heart Singers, FBC McComb	Mrs. Alma Boone Mr. Truman Manning
	Nora Wiggins	Harvey Boyte Stanton BC
	Mr. & Mrs. Roy A. Roberts	Mr. Irvin M. Bradshaw Adult Men & Women SSC, Springfield BC
	Mr. Canoy Williams	Mr. & Mrs. George F. May Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Hawkins
	Mr. & Mrs. Henry N. Stevens	Mrs. Lydia Brinkley Mr. & Mrs. Mike Dean
	Mr. & Mrs. Clarence M. Shannon	Bobby Briscoe Mr. & Mrs. Charles L. Porter
	Mrs. Hazel M. Daniels and Family	Mr. Pat D. Brooks Mrs. Chloe F. Ganier Mr. & Mrs. George D. Henderson, II
	Mr. Martin Williams	D. D. Brown Dr. & Mrs. Martin V. Chaney
	Bobo & Barbara Ming	
	Dr. Donald Zacharias	
	Mr. & Mrs. Byron Dean	
	Claude Albritton	
	Mr. & Mrs. Buford Berry	
	Mrs. Bella Alexander Cecil & Penny Washington	
	Mr. & Mrs. Mike Lenoir	
	Mrs. Shirley Perry Allen Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence A. Gnemi	
	Mrs. Senita Webb Mr. & Mrs. Frank O. Crosthwait, Jr.	

APRIL 2013

HONORS

God Dwells Among His People • Exodus 26:30-33; 29:43-46; 40:34-38

Many years ago, my three year old daughter was upset. I asked her, "What's the matter?" She replied, "You always tell us about Jesus and how He loves us, but He never comes to see us!" As we continue God's Story, we come to Exodus 25-40, a section of Scripture devoted almost entirely to the theme of God's tabernacle, the visible symbol of His presence among His people. This lesson shows God's desire to make His presence and glory known to His people and will help you live with a constant awareness of His presence in your life.

Follow God's Plan (Ex. 26:30-33)

The tabernacle was basically a large tent. Yet this tent was given specific dimensions in order to teach God's people about His transcendence and His imminence. As their Creator and Redeemer, God was transcendent over His people. This transcendence is preserved in the tabernacle's design by having "the Most Holy Place," God's abode, at the point most distant from the entrance of the tent, concealed by a thick "curtain" (Exod. 26:31; NIV), with accessories covered in gold (26:32), and accessible only by the high priest once a year on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16). The rest of the tabernacle was called "the Holy Place" (Exod. 26:33) and was accessible only to the priests, but on a regular basis.

Thus, one did not just stroll casually or unadvisedly into the presence of God.

However, God was also imminent, accessible to His people. The tabernacle was located in the middle of the 12 tribes with three tribes encamped on each of the four sides. The men of each family were expected to bring animals to the entrance of the tabernacle's courtyard and give them to the priests for sacrifices.

God's transcendence was thus made imminent. The huge gap between His holiness and

the people's sinfulness was bridged by God's provision of the tabernacle and attendant sacrificial system. By following God's plan, the people were enabled to experience God's presence in their midst.

Encounter God's Presence (Ex. 29:43-46)

The primary purpose of the tabernacle was to unite God with His people, to be a daily reminder of His beneficent presence in their midst. God promised to meet Moses at the

entrance to the tent (29:42) and also the Israelites (29:43). He promised to "dwell among the Israelites and be their God" (29:45). In fact, God indicated He had delivered the Israelites from Egyptian bondage so that He "might dwell among them" (29:46b).

Yet, how does a holy God dwell with sinful people? The answer to this important question has both a human and a divine aspect.

First, people must obey God and follow His plan for their lives. Obeying

God is the exact opposite of sinning against Him. However, obedience alone cannot qualify people to stand in God's presence. God has to sanctify or consecrate them, meaning "to set them apart in a way acceptable to God." The Hebrew verb *qadash* rendered "consecrated" in 29:43, and "consecrate" in 29:44, referred to God's action of making the tabernacle, Aaron the high priest, and his sons, acceptable to Him in terms of holiness. Indeed, the verb *qadash* can mean "to make holy."

Both the human aspect of obedience and the divine aspect of consecration

were necessary to accomplish the primary purpose of uniting God with His people. He promised to "meet with the Israelites." The Hebrew verb rendered "meet" referred to God's promise "to appear to, to gather with, or to keep an appointment with" His people.

Acknowledge God's Glory (Ex. 40:34-38)

Having received all detailed instructions for building the tabernacle (Exod. 25-31), Moses and the people constructed the tabernacle just as God prescribed (Exod. 35-40). The final five verses of Exodus are devoted to God's spectacular response to their obedience and faith. We are told of "the cloud" that covered the Tent of Meeting" (40:34,35,36,37,38). This cloud was a visible pillar of smoke that connected heaven and earth, a pillar that could easily be seen by all the people all the time. At night, the cloud was filled with fire so the people could see it even in the darkness. The cloud would lift up from the tabernacle when God wanted His people to travel and it would remain upon the tabernacle when He wanted them to stay put. The cloud represented God's glory among His people, a presence they could not ignore.

VanHorn is Dean of the Mississippi College School of Christian Studies and the Arts.

What Do I Do Now? • Job 31:5-6, 9-10, 13-17, 24-30, 33-34

Job appears to be talking to himself about the golden period of his life when his agricultural business was prospering and his family was large and happy and flourishing. It looks as if he is trying to figure out what has happened to him. In remembering the "months gone by," his self-description is not unlike God's description of him in the early chapters of Job. He is longing for the time when God's intimate friendship had blessed his house and his family was close around him. He was in his prime—men respected him and sought his godly counsel, they spoke well of him and commended him for his benevolent work in the city. He chose the way for the people and sat as their chief—dwelt as a king among his troops. Job had been great in the eyes of the men who knew him and worked with him.

One who is highly successful may be great, but not for the reason of being successful. A man of wealth may be great, but not simply because he is wealthy, as observed in the experience of the rich young man who came to Jesus seeking greatness. A person in high position may be great; however, position never makes a man, but the man the position. The disciples desired to be great which they learned came from being servants. Greatness

is a matter of character as demonstrated by the life of Job.

Job's description of his moral actions and his relationships with other people may serve as a good model for a code of ethics today (29:7-25). Notice the strong, bitter language Job uses to describe the mistreatment he received from his friends and neighbors and God's perceived abandonment in these critical circumstances.

Men of the lowest strata in society now mock him, and their sons deride him in their songs

and childish chants. Rejected, Job a very human man looks to heaven one more time and accuses God of turning away from him, of depriving him of His presence. Job was not seeking healing of his physical problems, but desiring the relationship and fellowship with God he had delighted in for so long.

Job made a covenant with God by swearing in God's name that he had lived up to His moral standards. To

emphasize his innocence of any deceit, Job states that he is willing to be weighed on God's honest scales. He continues issuing an oath that if he has been deceitful and not been honest, truthful, and faithful in his marriage, then his wife should leave him and his house and marry another man and care for him as his wife.

In testimony of other relationships, he claims to have treated his servants fairly as God's creations because He made all people the same.

He understands having to answer to God for his actions toward others, and whether he has shared what God has given him with those less fortunate, all precious creations in His sight. In Job's day, with so many cruel masters, the demeaning of servants was common practice. But Job recognized that demeaning servants, like any other evil deeds done, would have to be accounted for in the presence of God.

Job acknowledges that being

wealthy is not sinful, but to put trust in that wealth, in one's own ability, or in other gods would be idolatry. He confesses that if he looks into the heavens and regards any of the radiance and splendor of the creation seen there as worthy of worship, he would have been unfaithful to God on high. But, his behavior continued to be rooted in his faith in God as ours should be today as well.

Job hastens to be clear in that he has not rejoiced or gloated when misfortune has come to any of his enemies. This sin has to do with delighting in the destruction of enemies—people who oppose or harm or persecute those who serve God. He has not sinned by wishing a curse on the life of one of his enemies, but has offered compassion to anyone who is suffering. Job explains that if he seems guilty because he has withdrawn from society seemingly to conceal sin in his life as some men do, it is not so. He is living as a recluse, keeping silent, because he dreads the judgmental hostility and abuse he has received publicly from his friends and others who have already passed judgment on him.

Duncan is a member of First Church, Starkville.

Bible Studies for Life with W. Wayne VanHorn



Explore the Bible with Marion D. Duncan



God Establishes A Kingdom for His People • 2 Samuel 7:8-17,22-24

God's Story is all about His desire to restore sinners to fellowship with Him. To do this, He chose a people to carry out His redemptive initiatives. These people had to adapt their lives to His way. Our last two lessons have focused on God's instructions on how His people should live (June 23) and on His desire to dwell among them (June 30). This week we examine the covenant God established with David. As God had established the Israelites as a nation, He would also establish them under an eternal kingdom. He desires all people everywhere to be a part of His kingdom.

The Nation Established (2 Sam. 7:8-11a)

God's providence was evident in David's ascendancy to Israel's throne. God took David "from the pasture and from following the flock to be ruler" over His people (2 Sam. 7:8b; NIV). Additionally, God made His presence known throughout David's life by going with him wherever he went (7:9a) and by cutting off all his enemies (7:9b). However, God had bigger plans for David. He intended to make his name great so that David's name would be "like the names of the greatest men of the earth" (7:9c). God intended to make David the greatest king to sit on Israel's throne.

God's plans for David were part of His larger plans for His people. People

need a place to live. God chose the land of Canaan, a narrow strand between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River, in which His people would dwell. This narrow strand served as a land bridge in the midst of the great civilizations of the world: Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, and later Rome. The conquest, begun under Joshua, was completed under David, who God used to establish the Hebrew nation securely in the land. In so doing, God fulfilled

His promise to David to "plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed" (2:10a). The promise to give rest to David and to Israel from all enemies (7:11b) would mean "wicked people" would not oppress them anymore (7:10b-11a).

The Kingdom Established (2 Sam. 7:11b-17)

God then focused His attention squarely on David, promising to "establish a house" for him (7:11b). In



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N a m e (7:13a). G o d promised to establish his kingdom f o r e v e r as well. Just as God had interacted with

David in good and bad, so He would punish Solomon when he did wrong (7:14). However, God promised not to remove His love from Solomon as He had done when Saul disobeyed (7:15). The term "love" renders the Hebrew word chesed, one of the most theologically rich words in the entire Bible. Chesed refers to God's covenant faithfulness and loving kindness. With the immediate future laid out for him, David no doubt was pleased to hear the Lord say, "Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever" (7:16).

The Purpose Established (2 Sam. 7:22-24)

David was overwhelmed by God's promises. He expressed his gratitude by acknowledging God's greatness and His uniqueness, "How great you are, O Sovereign Lord! There is no one like you, and there is no God but you" (7:22).

David also acknowledged the uniqueness of God's people. These people were chosen by God. He redeemed them "to make a name for Himself" and "to perform great and awesome wonders" by giving them victories over other nations and their gods (7:23). The one true God was to be represented by one true people. The eternal hope was those who not numbered with God's people would turn to Him based on the evangelistic work of His people. They were to reflect God's holiness and serve as priests bringing alienated people to Him.

God is the same today. He desires His people to be a "royal priesthood" and a "holy nation" (1 Peter 2:9). His people are part of Christ's eternal kingdom and are to be witnesses to others about Him. Accepting Jesus can help you make plans for your life based on God's greater purposes.

VanHorn is Dean of the Mississippi College School of Christian Studies and the Arts.

Am I on the Right Path? • Job 33:13-22; 36: 8-12

At this point in the book of Job, there is a break in the continuity of the writing giving some commentators and writers reason to think that chapters 32-37 may not have been written at the same time or by the same poet as the greater part. Some of the criteria for this follow. Elihu is not mentioned in the prologue or the epilogue. God rebukes only the three men, not acknowledging a fourth. Elihu speaks in a lower order of poetry and a higher order of theology than the others, and Job does not make a response to him. Some of Elihu's speeches are quoted verbatim from Job's words as though he had read them rather than heard them. And most telling is that the language reflects a later stage of Hebrew than the rest of the text. However, this information does not make this section any less a part of God's Holy Word. (Devotional Introduction to Job)

With the last passionate words of Job, the three friends turned to leave him to himself since in his eyes he was righteous. Realizing that the friends had nothing more to say, Elihu was prompted to speak because his anger was greatly aroused. He had remained silent waiting for the older men to speak out of respect for their age and wisdom. He could be called the peren-

nial sophomore whose mission in life is to set his seniors straight. He was confident that he had been born educated and, thus, lacked humility. He was harshly critical and found no good in any of them. He was angry with Job for justifying himself rather than God and with the others because they had found no way to refute Job, yet condemned him. Young Elihu concluded that Job was self-righteous and elevated himself to the place of God as judge.

He calls Job to listen to what he has to say to him because he is speaking by the help of God who has breathed life into him. Elihu feels certain that his speech will be so strong that Job will break down under its persuasion. He arrogantly claims that he is the one who can mediate between God and Job in this case. He assures Job that his defense of him will be full of compassion, but in the end speaks cruelly and desires the hardest punishment for him.

Elihu told Job that he was wrong to demand an answer from God for his suffering because God is greater than man and cannot be brought into controversy with him as Job demands. His premise is that God does speak in different ways, but that many times men do not listen or understand further denounced Job. Sometimes God speaks in dreams and visions while men sleep,

s o m e - t i m e s through His Word and still s m a l l voice, a n d s o m e - t i m e s he shouts

him, sees his face and shouts for joy.

The redemptive nature of God's discipline comes in many different ways, including pain, for the purpose of turning people from their destructive patterns of thought and behavior. We must turn to God in adversity and be open to the ways He may be using that adversity to give us guidance about our lives.

Elihu continues lecturing Job telling him that God works automatically without involving people in what he does and without responding to what they do. He was expressing the same flawed concept held by Job's three friends when he claimed that God takes note of men who are bound by cords of affliction and tells them their sins affirming that if they will repent, obey, and serve Him, they will spend the rest of their days in prosperity and contentment. If they do not listen, they will perish by the sword and die without knowledge. This view has some truth in it, but fails to allow for exceptions and for the impact of satanic evil in the world. God does bless those who repent and obediently serve Him, but he does not promise health, wealth, and prosperity.

Duncan is a member of First Church, Starkville.

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pain. The picture here is of man's excruciating, consuming suffering deteriorating to the point of bringing the sufferer close to death. Man needs help to interpret the significance his suffering which may be provided by the angel mediator. This mediator is witness to the man's uprightness and asks for his deliverance and for restoration of his health and youth and revival of his spiritual condition. Man then prays to God, finds favor with

Just for the Record



Jesse Strittman and Donnie Copeland, **SILVER CREEK CHURCH, MCCOMB**, recently completed the requirements for the position of church music director. The course was provided by the Providence Learning Center of New Orleans Seminary. Shown are Strittman, pastor Jimmy T. Smith, Jr., and Copeland.



DESOTO CHURCH, SHUBUTA, gave each mother present a plant on Mother's Day. Shown are pastor's wife Betty Davis and Helen Williams.



MIDWAY CHURCH, PONTOTOC, honored its graduating seniors with a recognition ceremony, Bible presentation, and luncheon. Shown are Heather Mabry, pastor Tommy Tackett, and Cole Caples.



Truitt Memorial Baptist Church Pearl, Mississippi

Seeking New Staff Member!

Truitt Memorial Baptist in Pearl, MS is seeking a part time Music Assistant. This is a paid staff position. Duties will be playing keyboard for a praise team, assisting children's choir volunteer leaders and general assisting the Associate Pastor/Minister of Music. Vocal skills needed, keyboard skills a must. Please contact church office between 8 AM and 12 Noon, Monday-Thursday for more information and to set up interview. 601-939-2975.

Revivals & Homecomings

► **Corinth Church, Heidelberg:** Homecoming, July 6 - 7; Sat., gospel music concert with the Musgrove Family and The Searchers 6 p.m.; Sun., 10 a.m.; Andy Miller, speaker; homecoming choir, slide show, dinner on the ground, and ice cream social; old-fashioned attire requested, not required.

► **Conehatta Church, Conehatta:** Homecoming, July 7; services, 11 a.m., followed by lunch and program at 1:30 p.m.; Tommy Anderson, speaker; His Glory Singers, music; Jimmy Jones, pastor.

► **Goodwater Church, Smith County:** Homecoming, July 14; services, 11 a.m., followed by covered dish lunch and cemetery association meeting; Roger Barnes, speaker.

► **Paynes Church, Charleston:** Homecoming, July 14; singing, 10 a.m.; services, 11 a.m., followed by pot-luck meal; Gerald Shook, speaker.



DUNCAN CHURCH, DUNCAN, celebrated its 100th anniversary June 9, with over 100 people attending the celebration. Shown are John T. Miller, pastor Macklyn Hubbell, Thomas N. Boschart, Curtis D. Boschart, and Kenneth B. Hood.

► **Terry's Creek Church, Magnolia:** Revival, July 12 - 14; Fri. - Sat., 7 p.m.; Sun., 11 a.m., followed by covered dish luncheon and afternoon service; Rick Kennedy, speaker; Ed May, music; LaVerne Summerlin, pastor.

► **Longview Church, Starkville:** Revival, July 7 - 10; Sun., 11 a.m., followed by lunch and 1:30 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Jim Futral, speaker; Larry Futral, music; Kay Verral, accompanist; Larry W. Yarber, pastor.



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For Booking Information:

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